The Unitarian Calendar

Now thank we all our God,
With heart and hands and voices:
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours to-day.

MARTIN RINKART.

Vol. 3 NOVEMBER — 1910 No. 3

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With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 175 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and Cor. Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco, Cal.

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Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional work.

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The Unitarian Calendar

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EVERYBODY'S THANKSGIVING

By Rev. Frederic Gill

Of the First Unitarian Church, Arlington, Mass.

If the benefits usually mentioned as the reasons for gratitude are the only or the chief causes of thankfulness, Thanksgiving concerns some people, but not all. For many are not prosperous; others have lost dear ones by death; others have suffered treachery and shame from their friends, instead of finding honor and faithfulness. But the reasons commonly given are not the most important grounds for thankfulness. They are superficial, good as far as they go, but they do not go very far, penetrate very deep, nor reach very high. The deeper grounds of thankfulness are found in things that may be shared by all, whatever their circumstances may be. The great, essential one is the fact of being alive in this world. Life is good. The goodness of life is shown in what it offers to all, even the unfortunate and the unsuccessful. A man can always, with the help of God, face life courageously and be a man. He can keep his heart peaceful and quiet, and do something to help on the development of goodness and happiness among men. He who is burdened with poor health can do much in spite of that hindrance. Health, wealth, friends, a happy home, are all good things, yet men who have little of them can find abundance of good. Every man can link his life with the life of God, and, finding thus a

secure centre of life and joy for his own heart, go out into the world where, in spite of failure or sorrow, he will find numberless opportunities for worthy living. Daily life always has possibilities of dignified and happy living; character and service, with the satisfaction that accompanies them, are open to all. And these are the best things. It is the sublime prerogative of religion to declare these divine possibilities to men and thus reveal the deeper sources of gratitude. So there may be a Thanksgiving for everybody.

ONE WITH GOD

By Rev. Frank Abram Powell

Of the First Unitarian Church, Helena, Mont.

To be one with God is to be in tune with the universe and in touch with all of its resources. I believe that the one great secret of happiness and power is harmony with God. To be in harmony with God is to have all the tides and currents, all of the winds and waves, all of the forces and powers of the universe in your favor. To live and truly work with God is to make life one long, triumphant holiday.

But someone may ask the practical question, "How am I to establish this union of my own life and effort with the life and laws of God?" There is deep and abiding significance in the saying of Jesus, "He that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened, and he that asketh, receiveth." Every revelation of science, every deep insight of some prophet of the soul, like Emerson, and every quick experience of your own soul is a revelation of the inner Reality, and points the way toward harmony with God.

To be in harmony with God we must at least be in harmony with our higher selves. As long

as we fall below our own ideals of what is right and true and just, we cannot feel that we are in harmony with God, who is infinite justice and righteousness and truth and love. And you may be assured that whatever deep and triumphant experiences were ever true for any soul, in any age of the world, are just and possible for us of to-day, because God is just as near to us as to any people. He is just as truly present in our time as in any time. We should make it the one end and aim of our lives to find out the deeper secrets of our own nature, and live according to the highest privileges which the divinity within makes possible for us.

SOME SPIRITUAL ASSETS

By Rev. George E. Hathaway

Of the First Unitarian Society, Manchester, N. H.

The single scientific conclusion which we call evolution is freighted with immense spiritual significance. Mankind has never achieved a more stirring religious insight than the discovery that life is an *ascent*—not a descent.

How much it means for man's higher life to discover that he is not a "god in ruins," but a god in the making; that he did not begin his racial existence endowed with the sum of all spiritual virtues, but that he began his career in ignorance and brutishness and has achieved intelligence and manhood!

From this central conviction many thrilling spiritual possibilities radiate. The long pathway of ascent that lies behind us is studded with the memorials of many a divine achievement. In these is the promises of greater things yet to be. For if it is an ascent that lies behind us, surely it is an ascent which lies *before* us.

In the presence of these truths even the humblest of us finds a new justification for his virtue, good faith and honor; finds a new justification for his sincere (even if unappreciated) service of others; finds a new justification for his religious aspirations and spiritual emotions in something sublimer than the commercial consideration of his own salvation. His life, too, obscure though it may be, contributes its share to the eternal evolution of the higher life of mankind.

The greatest chapter in religious history is yet to be written.

To say that men's intellectual beliefs do not determine their conduct, is like saying that the ship is moved by the steam, and not by the steersman. The steam, indeed, is the motive power—the steersman, left to himself, could not advance the vessel a single inch. Yet it is the steersman's will and the steersman's knowledge which decide in what direction it shall move and whither it shall go. —*John Stuart Mill.*

May the courage, may the insight, may the deep confidence in truth and in the search for it which made our fathers in the faith strong, come to us. New questions meet us in our day, new forms of thought. May we have the old courageous and magnanimous spirit, the manly faith of those willing to do, to dare, if need be to die for truth. —*S. M. Crothers.*

The race is divided into two classes—those who go ahead and do something, and those who sit still and inquire: "Why wasn't it done the other way?" —*O. W. Holmes.*

"TEN PRAYERS TO ONE THANKSGIVING"

By Rev. Brooke Herford

Ten prayers, but only one thanksgiving. That disproportion is about what one may find all through life. People are always so much more ready to think of what they want, than of what they have. Our very worship is sadly apt to run mainly into praying. And if there is this disproportion of praying over praising in our regular worship, one may be sure it is so in our common life.

Life, in its common elements, is a wonderful thing, with its curious, intricate machinery of power, and its infinite play of emotion, and its numberless avenues of pleasure in the natural life. A night's sleep, what a miracle of mercy it is; and a new day, and the waking up with health to face it; aye, even a pleasant meal with one's household, is not that worth a thanksgiving? Or, an interesting book, an hour with an old friend, a Sunday's quiet resting after a strained and weary week, or some new light of interest or meaning in one's favorite line of study—it is such things as these, far more than great special blessings, which make up the sum of happy life; and it is such things, if one would but think of them more, and not always be taking them as a matter of course, which would fill our days with thanksgivings.

I lay the more stress upon this spirit of thankfulness, because I am apt to think that it is about the best part of religion. To some it may even be the only possible part. There are people in the present day who tell me they cannot pray; some have grown too skeptical about its being of any use; others feel it almost impious to attempt to change the Divine Will, which must be wiser than anything they could ask. And then, the

trouble is, that such people fancy that when they give up prayer, everything is gone; that religion, or at any rate piety—the warm expression of religion—is all at an end. But it is not so. There comes to my mind the saying of an old man whom I knew in my younger days, one of the noblest of our old Lancaster worthies. He was a man known far and wide for his sturdy integrity. One day when he had been acting as arbitrator, one of the parties thought he had not judged fairly—men often do think so when the decision goes against them—and he exclaimed indignantly to my old friend: "Man, do you ever pray?" My old friend answered: "Nay, I don't know that I do; I don't think I have aught to pray for; but I do a bit of thanksgiving now and then."

I always liked that answer. There was a good deal of wisdom in it, and true piety, too. So, if any of you hesitate about praying, be all the more careful to "do a bit of thanksgiving." Why, instead of prayer being the central fact of religion, I think the centre lies much more in thanksgiving. Anyone can pray. The most irreligious man—let him only be in trouble or danger enough—will begin to cry out for God's help and mercy; but there is very little religion in that; it is only like a drowning man clutching at a straw. But if a man thinks of God when he is in prosperity and health; thinks of him, and of these things as his mercies, so as to break out now and then into "a bit of thanksgiving," as the old man called it, then that is real religion. We want more of that kind of piety among us. I should not like to say that our religion has too much praying in it; I do not think Liberal Christians are in that danger; but I am sure we have too little thanksgiving.

"There lives and works
A soul in all things, and that soul is God."

UNITARIAN HYMN

(*Thanksgiving.*)

O Thou, whose perfect goodness crowns
With peace and joy this sacred day,
Our hearts are glad for all the years
Thy love has kept us in Thy way.

For common tasks of help and cheer,
For quiet hours of thought and prayer,
For moments when we seemed to feel
The breath of a diviner air;

For mutual love and trust that keep
Unchanged through all the changing time;
For friends within the veil who thrill
Our spirits with a hope sublime:—

For this, and more than words can say,
We praise and bless Thy holy name.
Come life or death, enough to know
That Thou art evermore the same.

—*John White Chadwick.*

One might as well hold that science will dry up a mother's heart or destroy man's love of beauty, as that science will ever extinguish man's desire for the beauty of holiness, or lead him permanently to abandon the act of worship; for these spiritual aspirations and exercises are simply the quest of the soul for its Source, and while God and man remain, the human heart will yearn for the Infinite Beauty and the Eternal Good. —*J. H. Crooker, D. D.*

"Your enterprise will succeed as fast and as far as every workman in it works as a fellow-workman with God."

THE "CALL TO PREACH"

By Rev. Lewis G. Wilson

The current discussion concerning the lack of young men for the ministry reveals the fact that we are dealing with a complex and many-sided situation. The problem which is presented is not one which yields to a simple solution, like the improvement of the economic conditions of the ministry. It and its corollaries are related to the whole fabric of modern society, Catholic and Protestant, orthodox and heterodox. The ministry is replenished and the pulpit is re-enforced from the social aggregate; but if society contains little or no material for the making of ministers, the pulpit must go a-begging.

The character of any given age is determined not so much by the thoughts as by the desires of the age immediately before it. To have a great school of artists, there must first appear a company of men and women who yearn for the creation of the beautiful. To have a generation of great theologians, there must first arrive a group of Monicas, Jeanne Lefrancs and Esther Stoddards.

In short, society furnishes what is truly desired by its members. To account for a falling off in any profession or "calling," it is pertinent to ask if anything has been "called" for. There are natal and prenatal reasons why so few young men care to enter a profession which finds its greatest satisfaction in "things not seen." The fathers and mothers of, say, the last thirty years have not been longing for ministers, but, on the whole, really wishing to get away from ministers. Too many have been praying for fortunes, luxuries, pleasures, freedom to indulge in each new device for amusement, exemption from care and responsibility, superficial titles, decorations, and society favors. And the type of the modern

young man, dapper, sophisticated, well-groomed, luxurious and selfish, is the answer to such prayers.

To have a Christian minister for a son was once the almost unspeakable glory of the average mother. To have a son who may turn out to be nothing but a *minister* is, all too often to-day, to have made a mess of it. "What a pity! Poor woman, how happy she would have been if her Charles had tried the Stock Exchange!" The actual desires of one generation—desires that are cherished by parents and cultivated during the adolescence of their offspring — determine, far more than most people realize, the general character of the succeeding generation. If there are not enough ministers, one reason at least is because there are not a sufficient number who have heard any "call" to become ministers from the world that has created them.

Hast never come to thee an hour,
A sudden gleam divine, precipitating, bursting all these bubbles, fashions, wealth;
These eager business aims,—books, politics, art, amours,
To utter nothingness?

—*Walt Whitman.*

Belief in any essential evil, in any fatality of everlasting pain, is philosophically inconsistent with our belief in God; human nature is incapable of doing a thing which God cannot utilize for good. —*C. A. Bartol.*

WHAT DOES FREEDOM MEAN?

By Rev. F. M. Bennett

Of the Unitarian Society of Lawrence, Kans.

Freedom is not an end in itself, but always a means to an end. Considered simply as an end, it has mostly negative results. As a means, it may help to great purposes of life.

The free life is the natural life. The free religion is the natural religion. But freedom does not mean lawlessness. It does not mean social anarchy. It means the "perfect law of liberty." It means love. It means order and harmony in the highest realms of life. It means the fine expression of truth and right and beauty. It means opportunity for the most worthy fellowship with God and man. It means the willing service of each in the interest of all, and the service of all in the interest of each human soul. It does not mean religious diversity, but religious unity, a living together in the realms of the spirit. It means brotherhood, a unity of purpose and performance for increase of the life divine.

The privileges of freedom are simply the privileges of a natural union and fellowship with man and God, the opportunity to do our part as men and women in the building of the best human order, the opportunity to do our part with God for the perfecting of the soul. The end of freedom is spiritual unity with God and man. That is what freedom is for.

My creed is the Science of God, which enlighteneth all. My Gospel is the love of God, which saveth all. My heaven is life in God, which is accessible to all. My church is that invisible Kingdom of God, in which is all truth, all love, all holiness. —*Keshab Chandra Sen.*

By Rev. Charles E. St. John
Of the First Unitarian Church. Philadelphia, Pa.

Workers for such a cause as ours ought always to be cheery, patient and brave. It is a wonderful privilege to devote even a portion of one's time and strength to the service of the spiritual life of mankind. As Unitarians, we are permitted to help all sorts of people to know more about God and their duty as children of God, more about the eternal worth of life. It is our privilege to help people to understand what they exist for. We are commissioned of God to intensify people's moral purposes, and impart to them that dignified and happy bearing which all possess in whom the things of the spirit are distinctly to the front rather than things material. As church workers, we are permitted to bear witness to the supremacy of the spiritual aspect of life. We have the power to convince at least a few souls that the value of life comes out most clearly when its meaning is sought on the spiritual side.

When people fully commit themselves to such a service as this, it is inconceivable that they should yield to any mood of despair, morbid self-criticism, or selfishness. For the natural reaction upon the worker for such a cause is one of cheerfulness and hope. It is hard to understand why every preacher, for instance, should not be a good preacher; for the glory of the subjects with which he is permitted to deal must of necessity, when they are understood, illumine his mind and glorify his personality. There is some lack of conviction, some dimness of vision, in any preacher who fails to produce at least an occasional warmth of response from his congregation.

So, too, with the lay workers; if they really grasp the faith in its breadth and height, if they

really live by the generous principles of religion, they are lifted into an exaltation of the spirit which permanently controls their moods and their conceptions of life. They cannot be other than kindly in spirit, steadfast in endeavor, and glad of the privilege of doing such things for mankind. Lifted up by this spiritual exaltation, glorified by this magnificent moral responsibility, all earnest Unitarians ought to impress the people among whom they live as being pre-eminently persons of good hope, moral helpfulness, and vital spiritual energy.

RELIGION IN ALL THINGS

By Rev. Kenneth E. Evans

Of the First Unitarian Church, Chicopee, Mass.

As Life's factory grows larger, men divide into departments. "Business here," they say; "Here Politics; there Art, and Recreation, and there Religion." But divide it as they may, the product is one. While Religion,—does it not, after all, enter into every phase of life? Does it not touch our labors in the workshop as well as our Sunday musings? What are our political and economic problems, at the last, but religious problems? What the tasks of physician and inventor? Do they not deal, in their way, with Religion's central theme,—the upbuilding, the beautifying, the perfecting of human life? Let no one seek to divorce, then, his religion from his politics or bar it from his counting-room. As in the forums and the shops of old, men raised their altars to the gods, so to-day should our factories and State houses, no less than our churches, be illumined by visions of what Man is and *may become.*

THE LARGER CHURCH

By Rev. Joseph P. MacCarthy

Of the People's Church, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Not every community needs a so-called institutional church, but every church should demonstrate its divine right to be by meeting the actual conditions and doing the necessary work of the particular community in which it is situated. The institutional church is the result of an attempt to follow the teachings and practice of the man of Galilee, whom the common people heard gladly because he was interested in their everyday life. It is an effort to get back to the real Jesus who gave as the only conclusive evidence of his Messiahship the work that he was doing. —relieving the sufferings and lightening the burdens of his fellow-men. Real Christianity has never yet had a fair trial, and the theory of the institutional church is to get back to primitive Christianity and thus attain to real Christianity.

The theory of the larger church is, in short, to touch the community at every available point and as continuously as possible. Does the church in a practical way touch the problems of the people, especially the problems that present themselves to the young men and women in a factory town? Are the young women helped to live decently on their weekly wage, and are the young men learning that the highest asset in the capital of the world is character? When the young people know that the church is attempting these things, they will have an increasingly high respect for religion. In this larger church the ordinary work of the church is carried on, but it will do more and will make an earnest effort to touch the many problems that are continually presenting themselves to the people.

NOTES

During October and a part of November Rev. Frank Wright Pratt has been visiting the churches in Vancouver and Victoria. Here he found groups of earnest Unitarians, and looks forward with confidence to the building of strong churches. During his absence from his charge in Calgary, Rev. J. Edward Wright of Montpelier has been conducting the services. On his way to Calgary Dr. Wright stopped at Winnipeg and met the members of Mr. Vrooman's congregation and spoke several times, to the great satisfaction of all. Out of Dr. Wright's experience he is able to bring substantial encouragement and increased enthusiasm, and these Canadian churches have been fortunate to have the advantage of his presence and strong message.

One of the interesting movements of modern religious life is that of the ministers, from the narrow confines of denominationalism to the wide fields of free expression and unhampered activity in behalf of social betterment and reform. Many of these ministers leave their own churches and seek fellowship among the Unitarians, many go forth and establish independent churches, but a great number remain affiliated with orthodox bodies, and insist, despite their early pledges to the contrary, on denouncing creedal tests and theological restrictions. The tendencies are not all in the direction of greater liberality, however, for one does not need to be a genius to observe that, curiously, along with this drift toward larger religious freedom there is another tidal flow toward sacerdotalism and ecclesiastical imperialism. Both tendencies are in the seething unrest of our times, and which shall control most in the immediate destiny of the world depends upon the efforts of free men

and women who see the greater need and are willing to meet it.

It has been a great pleasure to the officers of the American Unitarian Association and many others to welcome to this country Professor Heramba Chandra Maitra, president of the Sadharan Brahmo-Somaj of Calcutta. Professor Maitra, during his stay of five or six weeks in this country, has filled many appointments at conferences, churches, and other gatherings. One of his most interesting subjects has been "The Future of Religion as Seen From the Eastern Standpoint." He also lectured upon "Emerson," and "The Brahmo-Somaj."

Many of us remember with great satisfaction the visits of Mozoomdar to this country, and we are glad to associate in our minds Professor Maitra and his message with that of his great predecessor.

In these days of marked indifference to the ministerial profession, it is gratifying to note that the Meadville Theological School starts out with an unusually large entering class, the capacity of the dormitories being taxed to the utmost. Prof. Carl Greve was elected by the Board of Trustees to the new German professorship on Oct. 3d, beginning his work on the 15th. During the summer, extensive improvements have been made about the buildings, thus making the "Hill of the Prophets" more beautiful than ever. It would be difficult to imagine a place better suited to that serious and deliberate preparation, under the guidance of trained teachers, which in these turbulent times is needed for those who desire to proclaim a definite and forceful religious message. This school deserves the appreciative encouragement and support of every Unitarian Church.

The Ministers' Institute held at Marblehead, Mass., during the last week in September, the autumn conferences throughout New England, the Middle West, the Rocky Mountain District and the Pacific coast, the largely attended Alliance gatherings and the renewed interest in Sunday school work, with a carefully selected corps of lecturers who will visit all parts of the country during the next few months, all indicate that the Unitarian cause is not going to suffer for lack of enthusiasm or able sponsors. Our work is largely educational and is always conducted under the assumption that human nature is not going to be made over in a day, but by a process of wise direction and intelligent inspiration elevated to broader views of life and a more effective sense of the divine presence in the world.

Printed pledge cards have been prepared by the American Unitarian Association to assist our congregations in raising money for church extension and the missionary work of the Association. A sample card will be sent to each minister and a full supply will be furnished all churches applying. It is thus hoped that by adopting a carefully planned system of giving the annual contribution will be substantially increased.

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